

Skagway, Alaska,

Sept. 6, 1935.

Dr. John Somerndike,

156 Fifth Ave.

New York, N.Y.

My dear Dr. Somerndike,

I have never thanked you for your kindness in sending me my Father's horn and the books. They came through in very good condition, and I certainly appreciate this kindness. It means a great deal to me to have these things, as you will understand.

One of my classmates wrote me recently that he would like to have his church do something for missions. He feels that interest has waned because they had no direct contact with the field. He would like to contribute in a small measure to our work here. What is the usual procedure in such a case. Should the money come directly to me or should it go through the hands of the Board? I understand that the Butler, Pa. Church is helping to support us here. Does it supply the whole amount paid to us, or does some come from the general fund of the Board? If the latter is the case, may I suggest that the general fund be relieved to the amount of the support ^{of} this church of my friend? If so, I will write him to that effect, and he will communicate directly with you. It is all still rather indefinite, but though it will probably not be a large amount, they would like some direct contact with the field.

We are enjoying our work very much and beginning September with determined efforts for the coming year, as also are the people of the town. Things are starting up again with lots

of vitality after the lull of the summer.

With regards from us both, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

J. G. Kluckhohn

*This is something we got out of our tourist
(see our August report for details)*

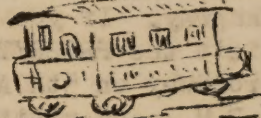


YOU'RE IN SKAGWAY. WHAT WILL YOU DO?

When you come to our town, if you do not go right away again to take one of the beautiful RAILROAD trips, you will doubtless have some time to spare, and will wonder how to avoid aimless walking about; the kind that makes your legs ache and your interests lag. Well here are a few suggestions.

**NOTHING LIKE
IT IN THE WORLD**

Take the TROLLEY-CAR ride with Martin Itjen, 50¢. Without this experience, no trip to Skagway is really complete. You will hear all about the history of Skagway, with many interesting personalities and details, including the tame fish. This takes from two to three hours, however, so if you are pressed for time, at least see Skagway, if not through the eyes of the romantic Mr. Itjen, with one of the other TAXI COMPANIES who also conduct sightseeing trips, at the same rates.



Another delightful way to see the town and also the surrounding country, is to take a short AIRPLANE ride, weather permitting. Nothing could well equal this in grandeur of natural beauty.

You will not want to leave town without visiting the various CURIO SHOPS, PHOTO SHOPS, and the ART SHOP, in which you may see many of the paintings of Mr.

VIC SPARKS, who is the man who has drawn in these sketches. And you will want to buy some of the moccasins and dolls that the NATIVE people make so beautifully. These things all make wonderful gifts, wedding or otherwise, and your friends back home will love seeing them.

One of the features of the "trolley trip" is the BLANCHARD GARDEN. If for any reason, you do not take this trip, at least stop at this garden, which is Skagway's pride and joy, and which is easily accessible, and will show you what can be done in the way of gardening here. (We wish we could all do it.) 6th Avenue, three blocks west of Broadway.

If you are here on a Sunday, we cordially invite you to church. There are two churches functioning in Skagway. If you are a Protestant, you will want to visit the PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, two blocks west of Broadway on 5th Avenue. Services are at 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., and visitors are always welcome. You may want to visit this church whether there is a service going on at the time, or not. It is always open, and you may go in and REST there if you wish. Be sure to notice the guest book, and put your names in it. The pastor and his wife, Rev. and Mrs. Klerekoper, will be glad to meet you, too, and if you are interested in the work of the church, you may stop in at the manse, next door, and if they are home, they will tell you all they can. Your church back home will be glad to hear you retell it when you return.



There is also a small, undenominational MISSION for the native people in the big gray building opposite the

bank. This is in charge of Miss Larson.

If you are Catholic, St. Mark's CATHOLIC CHURCH is on 5th Avenue, half a block east of Broadway. Father Gallant is the pastor. Mass is held here at 9 A.M. There is also a Catholic Mission which you may see at the northern end of State Street, near the airplane landing field, a large, new, brick building.

HIKES. Do you like to hike? That is one thing we have plenty of---any length, any difficulty. We have no snakes in this country, so you will be perfectly safe, as long as you don't get lost. Be sure to get good directions, and stick to the trails.

Mrs. PULLEN'S MUSEUM is another feature of Skagway. That costs 25¢, and Mrs. Pullen and Martin Itjen are two of a kind, so don't miss that either, if you are interested in seeing many relics of Skagway's Golden Age. It does not take long to see this, and you will find it conveniently situated in the Pullen House.

HOTELS. If you are staying in town for some time, there are three different possibilities for you to find rooms. The GOLDEN NORTH HOTEL, and the PULLEN HOUSE are both large, and can accommodate a number of people. The WHITE HOUSE is a smaller place, having interesting historical associations. Anyone can direct you to these places, and all have good service, and each has a distinct atmosphere of its own.

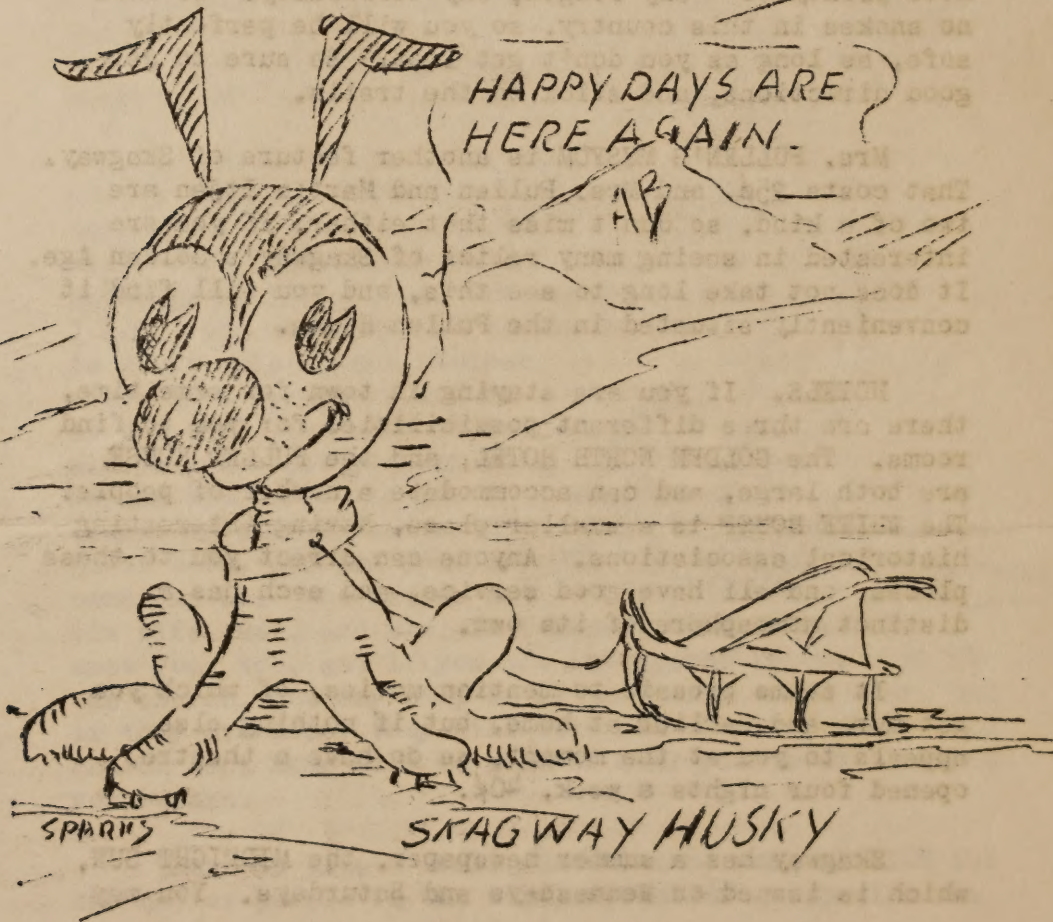
It seems prosaic to mention movies, of which you get more and earlier at home, but if nothing else appeals to you at the moment, we do have a theatre, opened four nights a week, 40¢.

Skagway has a summer newspaper, the MIDNIGHT SUN, which is issued on Wednesdays and Saturdays. You may

obtain these for 10¢ a copy.

Well, these are just a few ways of using up your spare time. We hope you will enjoy yourselves, and come to see us again sometime.

This sheet is given you with the compliments of the Presbyterian Church.



September 23rd, 1936

Rev. Fred G. Klerekoper
Skagway
Alaska

Dear Mr. Klerekoper:

Replying to yours of September 6th, I am writing to say that the First Church of Butler pledges to our Board the amount of your salary and pays it into the Board's treasury. It is contrary both to the rules of the Board and to the usual procedure of missionary organizations to have churches here in the States that wish to have a definite mission field assigned to them to send their money directly to the missionary. The church in Butler which has been supporting the work in Skagway is very much interested, and it would offend them greatly if we were to write and say that some other church wanted to assume the support of the Skagway Church, asking them to interest themselves in some new field. You can readily see that that would be in very bad taste and it would be resented by the Butler Church.

You can serve the Board in a very helpful way in this matter by asking your classmate whose church wants to do something for missions to adopt Mr. Wheeler as their missionary and to send their money to the Board of National Missions, designating it for his support. That will put him in the same relation to that church which you sustain to the church in Butler.

Faithfully yours,

JMS:PDS

F. S. Klerkoper

Incidents and Experiences in and Around Skagway, Alaska.

This month started off with an attendance that should be duplicated every Sunday. All the old "sourdoughs" and their wives turn out to church twice a year, Easter and Christmas. There were 175 out to the morning service. We wish them at Christmas a happy New Year and at Easter, a happy Fourth of July, for we know that we will never see them in the church again unless the undertaker brings them. But it does the preacher's heart good to see them fill the church once in a while. At Easter this year we felt it would be good to make as an Evangelistic appeal as the occasion would warrant. The majority stayed to the Sunday School program which follows the church service. Some of the "Oldtimers" must have felt rather small when we passed out to some of the children their awards for six years faithful attendance without missing a Sunday.

We had a very pleasant telegram from our classmate, Rev. R.K. Wheeler of Haines, asking us to come down and tie the knot between a young lady of the Haines House staff and himself. The boat belonging to the government, the "J-44", a ship about 60 feet long came up from Haines for us. We knew there was quite a wind blowing but did not realize the effect it would have on the water. The boat rolled and pitched all the 16 miles between here and Haines. We were sitting in the back cabin watching the coffee pot move around the wire railing that kept it on the stove. Occasionally our boat would forget its dignity and go under the waves instead of over them, And the back hatch permitted water to come in by the pailful. Suffice it to say our breakfasts that morning served a double purpose, to feed ourselves and the fishes.

Our Young People's Society has decided to call itself, the Christian Discussion Society. They have drawn up a constitution and elected officers and are now functioning as an organization. Our first project was to begin the cleaning up of a lot beside the church which needed it badly and was a real eyesore. The boys did the work with the help of the truck loaned by the city and the girls cooked a dinner which would have been a compliment to their mothers. Unfortunately it rained so hard on the following Tuesday nights that we have decided to put off the work until school is out. Future plans of the organization are to earn money to send some of their number to Sitka to the conference, make a definite contribution to the church, in material and social lines, and to learn more of the Christian life.

At the Congregational meeting held April 16, it was decided to follow the advise of the Board in changing the mortgage on the old church to the present building, and to liquidate the old building property. The reports showed the various organizations functioning well. The "envelope system" was found satisfactory and most efficient for a systematic giving to God's work and it was decided to continue it.

During the past month we made a survey of the town, finding out the church affiliations of all the members of the various families. We found many people very ignorant as to their relationship. Some thought that having had their children baptised by a church they were considered members. Others felt that because they were interested in the church they were members of it. We got such answers as, "Well I think I belong to the Presbyterian." Or, "If I belong to any I guess it is the Presbyterian." Our church is the only Protestant church open during the entire year. The Episcopal church is open certain

Sundays during the summer.

The band which we started some time ago, ~~####~~ made its first public appearance at the play given by the Alpine Club. Suffice it to say it was a tooting success. The Alpine Club is a local organization interested in public improvment. They give plays during year and the money is used for public benefit.

Spring is just starting to reach us now, and as in the spring the married young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of gardens ,so has ours. Flowers and vegetables thrive here and we would not neglect the gifts of dame Nature.

Thus has gone another month, easily because we have been busy, and especially so because we have placed our confidence in the Great Helper and not found Him wanting.

3rd November

Narrative of Labors and Activities , Presbyterian Church,
Skagway, Alaska.

This month our work has been divided between the church and the Presbytery. Our attendance has been holding its own and in some cases increasing, which is encouraging. Our trip to Presbytery being the largest single item on our program this month we will confine our narrative largely to that.

On Saturday night March 30th I had my head out of the door bidding a friend goodnight, when I heard the whistle of the "Princeton", down in the bay. It so happened the friend was one of our two taxi drivers and he offered to take me down to the wharf where the Princeton was to come. Our dock is almost a mile in length because \$\$ the tide runs in so far and boats drawing a lot of water cannot come in very close. When we arrived there we found Skipper Swanson with the aid of his helper, Roy Pratovitch, tying her up.

After she was securely tied, the Skipper brought several pairs of trousers up to the house and while he pressed them we chatted. It will be a long time before the demands of the town require and would support a tailor so the Skipper presses his own pants while in Skagway.

The Skipper, Rev. Verne Swanson preached for me in the morning, on "The Measure of Christ," and it seemed good to hear another voice in the pulpit.

We left Skagway on a beautiful Sunday afternoon and stopped in Haines about 16 miles away for the evening service. There we were met by our classmate Rev. R.K. Wheeler and taken to the home of John Swets, the farmer of our Haines Home. Haines has a larger native (Indian) population than does Skagway as could be seen by those in attendance at the evening service.

But rather than make this report dry by making it too verbose I will confine it to the highlights as I experienced them in our to Presbytery. An experience which cannot be easily forgotten, was when we slept in the cupboard of the Princeton's forecastle with our native friends surrounding us and above

Better not
let this
go in
print.
Indians
would not
appreciate
it

us. The Alaskan Indians like fish and for some reason or other there is a very peculiar odor connected with the ~~one~~ who eats fish in the way they do. Imagine us in the cupboard with only a little air coming in where the door is supposed to be and that air pungent with the odor that one can only understand when one has been confined in the same room with perspiring Indians. Add to this the comfort of two men, one six feet and the other six feet two in a five ~~foot~~ ^{foot} and a half cupboard and you will have an idea of how we slept the first night.

Signed:
Russell F. Adams

Another incident which marked our experience at Presbytery, I was talking with Roy Pratovitch in the town of Klawock, where Presbytery was being held. Our conversation was interrupted by the sound of a muffled shot from a high calibre gun in the house before which we were standing. Soon after the window on the second floor crashed out and an elderly woman began screaming in the Indian language that "She "had shot herself. I asked Roy what the woman had said and he told me the shot was from a gun pressed against the breast of a 15 year old girl, who found life a little more than she could bear. Had she only taken that care to the One who is able to carry with us all our burdens it might not have happened. My first impulse was to run for the doctor. He lived in the apartment where we were staying. He was out but his wife, a nurse, came over. We were too late and ~~she~~ she only breathed a few minutes after we returned. The

grief stricken mother tried to take her own life a little later with another gun but one of the men standing near put his hand over the trigger and the hammer fell on his hand cutting it badly between the thumb and first finger.

On our way back we stopped in the town of Hoonah and went to prayer meeting with the Rev. E.E. Bromley and wife. There for the first time I spoke with the aid of an interpreter. I had quite a definite thought in mind when I first stood up to speak but ~~found myself~~ rather embarrassed when I found myself listening to the interpreter instead of thinking what I had to say ~~next~~.

In our leisure time on the boat I got Mr. Swanson's gun out and shot at the seals, but I only managed to shell-shock them. Once we saw a sea lion and Roy Pratovitch came out and joined me with his 30-30 rifle. The sea lion was a reddish brown and could be seen for some distance. The seals were grey and could not be seen very easily. Another interesting thing was many schools of porpoises we met. You would see them lazily coming to the surface a great way off. Then they would hear the boat and come a-flying toward it. At night they would make phosphorescent streaks through the water just ahead of the boat. They could swim with the greatest ease at the speed of the boat which was some ten knots an hour. Rev. Waggoner told me they keep up with any boat in these waters. It was great sport trying to hit them with the pike pole (which I managed to break and had to buy another).

Presbytery meant a great deal to us not only in the pleasure of the trip but also the fellowship of the brethren. When one only meets a protestant minister at times of Presbytery or ~~vice~~ ^{rather}

twice a year one covets the privelege. We saw the problems of the various fields. We brought up our own problems and benefitted by the experience of some of our elder brethren.

March 17th, 1936

Rev. Fred G. Klerekoper
Skagway
Alaska

Dear Mr. Klerekoper:

I have a great foreign mission field all prepared for you, which I hope that you and your good wife will be willing to favorably consider. Dr. Greist of Point Barrow is retiring from active service on account of advanced age and ill health this summer. We have persuaded the government to take over the responsibility for the health work at Point Barrow, and they are making arrangements to assume this responsibility about the first of August. That is about the time that Dr. Greist will be leaving for the States.

The missionary who succeeds Dr. Greist will not be a physician, but will be responsible only for the cultivation of the church at Barrow, with occasional visits to Wainwright, about one hundred miles south of Barrow where Percy Ipalock is in charge and where the work is going forward in a very encouraging way. As a matter of fact, we ought to be building a church there now.

We have a fine church at Barrow, composed entirely of Eskimos. As a matter of fact, there are only about a dozen white people at Point Barrow, but you will find them very friendly white people and very nice folks with whom to associate. The membership of our Barrow Church is 325; and at Wainwright we have 126 members. There is a furnished manse at Barrow and we will provide your coal. It would be prohibitive for you to go there on any other basis, because the cost of sending coal up there is terrific. However, we will take care of that.

Your salary would be increased to \$1,800 per year, with all your fuel supplied.

You and Mrs. Klerekoper have always wanted a foreign mission field. I am offering you just what you have been wanting. Will you consider it? Please wire me your reactions. If you think well of the possibility of making such a move, I shall write you more in detail about it.

Feeling sure that you will give it your prayerful con-

sideration, and somehow feeling that it is a providential opening for you both, I am

Faithfully yours,

JMS:PDS

April
17th
1936

Rev. Fred. G. Klerekoper,
Skagway, Alaska

Dear Mr. Klerekoper:

I hesitated a long while before inviting you and your good wife to go to Barrow. It was such an important decision for anyone to make that I felt that it ought to be approached with the greatest deliberation and earnest prayer for guidance. I have no superstitions, but I have a strong faith in the guiding hand of providence in decisions which affect the kingdom work. I carefully weighed the qualifications of at least fifty men, but after analyzing every one of them I could not get away from the remembrance of the day when you and Nan came into my office and demonstrated by your attitude toward an appointment at Skagway the depth of your missionary consecration and the finality of your purpose to dedicate your lives to the cause of Christ in the neediest place, regardless of the sacrifice. That is the reason I offered the field to you.

Your telegram accepting gave me a thrill of joy. Now I want to give you the story: Of course you have heard at Skagway, as everyone hears in every part of Alaska, about the eccentricities of Dr. Geist and his militant temperament and attitude especially toward government representatives. As a matter of fact, his pugnacity is not limited to government representatives but it includes all his brethren, because he believes that they have departed from the faith once delivered from the saints, and that he alone is left to defend it from the assaults of heretics. His regime at Barrow has been characterized by conflicts on every hand with the local white people, of whom there are about fifteen at Barrow, and with others all the way down the Coast. However, notwithstanding all these things, which have made it so hard for him to work happily with other people, I believe that he and Mrs. Geist have carried on as faithfully as they could, and I refrain from criticizing them for their eccentricities because I know what sacrifices they have made in remaining at Barrow for the past twelve years, in consideration of their advanced age and the rigors of the climate.

We are going to provide for Mr. and Mrs. Geist by continuing their salaries for two years. We have arranged with the Government to take over the responsibility for the hospital and have succeeded in getting them to appropriate a budget of \$30,000 a year for that purpose. Our budget for the Barrow hospital has been \$6500 a year, so I feel that in making this arrangement we are doing a consistent piece of missionary work in behalf of the Eskimo. One of the nurses in the hospital will be Cornelia Phillips, who graduates from our nursing school at Ganado this year. She is a convert of our work at Barrow, and Miss Grieg, the chief of the nursing division of the Government, has agreed to give her the appointment as one of the staff of nurses. She ought to be very helpful to you in the church work, and she will cooperate with you, I am sure. I hope that the physician who is appointed will be a thoroughly Christian man, but of course we cannot dictate to the Government with reference to the religious convictions of any of their appointees. It has been my experience with the government representatives in educational and medical work, both in the Indian and Alaskan fields, that when they are approached in a kindly, Christian way, they usually reciprocate with the same degree of Christian courtesy, consideration, and kindness which we manifest toward them. I have no fears about your ability to get along with folks, and even if the government physician is not all that we would like him to be as an outstanding Christian leader, I am sure that with Christian grace and forbearance you

will find a basis of cooperation which will enable you to have free access to the hospital and to take advantage of all the opportunities to influence those who come there for treatment, toward the Christian way of life.

We have a good manse at Barrow which you will occupy. It is quite well furnished and it is provided with electric current. We have an electric generator which we may turn over to the Government if they will agree to assume the expense of operating it with the understanding that they will furnish electric current free to the manse and church. The Government will probably install a steam-heating plant for the hospital as soon as possible. When they do this we will ask them to extend the pipes to the manse so that you can get steam heat. Of course, we will have to pay for it, but it will be cheaper to make such an arrangement than to continue to ship coal from Seattle to Barrow as we have been doing for many years at \$36 a ton.

I am sending on the "Holmes" which leaves Seattle about the middle of May, a shipment of forty tons of coal for your use in the manse and to heat the church for regular services. On the basis of past experience, this will be quite sufficient for your needs. The Board will pay for the coal. We are also shipping a liberal supply of gasoline, kerosene, and lubricating oil for the tractor which you may want to use from time to time; but I leave the matter of using the tractor for your decision after you get to Barrow. Dr. Greist has been using it mainly to haul his supplies from the beach up to the storehouse and for transporting patients on a sled attached to the tractor from their homes to the hospital. I doubt very much whether you are going to need the tractor, but in case you might want it for purposes which I cannot now foresee, I am shipping a liberal supply of gasoline and lubricating oil, also some extra parts which Dr. Greist has informed me are needed in order to operate the tractor efficiently. Of course the electric generating plant works with gasoline, so if the Government does not take it over you will have plenty of gasoline on hand to operate the generating plant to provide lights for the manse and church. All this is simply to be prepared for any contingency which might arise.

On the basis of supplies which we have sent to the Greists in previous years for their family table, we have sent you a good assortment of food, mostly canned of course, but with some green vegetables which will be taken up on the boat by Captain Backland from Nome. You will have to be careful to safeguard these against freezing. We are also sending some household articles which Dr. Greist thinks will be needed. Our reason for sending food supplies to Barrow from Seattle is because it would be terribly expensive for you to buy them through the trader, Mr. Brower, and he would not be able to give you as wide an assortment. The cost of the food supplies will be charged against your salary in monthly deductions after you arrive at Barrow. You will not be called upon to pay for the fuel or for any of the household articles - only the food.

Now you will be wondering when you ought to go. Dr. Greist states that he will be coming out in August. There are some reasons why I think it might be well for you to get to Barrow before he leaves. If you are willing to make full allowance for his eccentricities and if you will listen to him talk without answering back, even though you may be under severe provocation, I would advise you to go early in August or even about the middle of July. You might make inquiries at Skagway as to the best means of transportation. I can get accommodations, I am sure, on the government boat which goes up there every summer and which I think would be the nicest way for you to go. To go in by plane via Fairbanks would be very expensive and too dangerous. I will take up the matter at once regarding the possibility of accommodations on the government education boat or coast guard cutter and ask them to take you on the one which gets to Barrow the soonest.

You will be interested to know that the same providential interposition which led us to select you for the Barrow field seems to have led Mr. Tuten, your classmate, to call upon me yesterday and offer himself for an Alaskan field. He is about to be married, has had two years' experience as a pastor here in New Jersey, and you probably will be hearing from him making inquiries about Skagway, for I have offered to send him there if he can see his way clear to accept it.

You will be the pastor of the church at Barrow. Related to Barrow is our outstation at Wainwright, one hundred miles to the South, where Percy Ipalook, a convert of Barrow who graduated from Sheldon Jackson School and spent five years at Duquesne University and Seminary, is now in charge as a lay missionary. Percy ought to be ordained soon, and I am going to do everything in my power to expedite that. However, Wainwright has always been under the care of Barrow, and there should be the closest relation between you and Percy in this work. On the way up you should make arrangements to have Percy call at the boat and meet you.

You will be interested to know that Captain Backland is taking up lumber all cut to size for a church building to be erected at Wainwright to house our Sunday school and congregation there. They have never had a building although they have upwards of one hundred church members.

At Barrow you will find Sergeant Morgan, the Signal Corps radio operator, and his wife - a very lovely and congenial family. Mr. Brower, who is the trader, and his family have always been very kind and considerate toward the Greists and their predecessors. Mr. Brower has been at Barrow for over forty years. You should cultivate the friendliest relations with him. He will be able to give you much valuable advice in adapting yourself to the climate and general conditions.

Now, if I have not covered everything, do not hesitate to write me. I shall report to our Board at its meeting next week that you have accepted, and I can assure you of their appreciation of yours and Mrs. Klerekoper's willingness to undertake this task, and of their earnest prayers in support of your labors.

With best wishes, I am

Faithfully yours,

JMS:BH

Skagway, Alaska,
May 11, 1936.

Dr. John Somerndike
156 Fifth Ave.
New York, N. Y.

Dear Dr. Somerndike,

Your letter of May 2nd we received today. How I wish that we could talk together face to face about this problem, as it does seem such a long time before one can write and receive a reply. Time is a big factor to us these days.

We are rather disappointed to learn that Mr. Tuten, if he comes could not arrive before July first. The tourist season begins in earnest here the first of June, and it is very important to have the church open during the summer. As it is definitely going to be hard on this church for us to leave so soon after getting here, we feel very strongly that the ~~change~~ change should be made with as little a jolt as possible. If our successor cannot arrive soon enough for us to be with him for awhile, he should certainly arrive so as not to miss a Sunday. I am sure that you will understand that I am saying this with the best interest of this church in mind.

As for our personal plans, of course we have not been able to make any definite ones yet. We do, however, have a vacation due us, as we have not taken any since being in Alaska, and we had hoped that we could take some time before the meeting of Synod, and then come back from Detroit to Walla Walla, and sail shortly after that. If, however, our boat does not leave until late in July, as some here seem to think, we could visit the family after Synod. I am sure that my way to Walla Walla will be paid, at least one way. The delegate from this Presbytery always does receive compensation for the trip, both ways.

We have a baggage problem, that perhaps you could help us solve. The regular passenger boats that leave Seattle for Nome go the outside passage, and do not stop at Juneau. This means that our freight would have to be shipped to Seattle from here if it were to go on the regular lines. However, the government education boat, the North Star, makes two trips to Nome. On the first I believe (though I have not verified this) that she comes up the coast here, stopping at least at Juneau, and possibly at Haines, before going on to Nome. On the second, I think she goes directly from Seattle to Nome, stopping at these ports on the way back. Now if this is true, and they could be induced to take our things, we could have them ready to be picked up on her first trip, which starts sometime in May, I think, but is quite slow, and they could be stored in Nome until we arrive there and pick them up. This would mean a great saving to us in freight, the difference between sending them ~~by~~ direct and via Seattle.

We want to thank you for your kindness in offering to reimburse us for some of the money we have put into this house, and I will tell you just what has been done in the way of permanent improvements. In the first place, out of a rough old shed off the kitchen which my wife had been using as a makeshift pantry, we have made a ~~study~~ study. It is on the south side of the house and so gets all the winter sunlight there is to be had, without getting too much of the summer sun. It is small, but cozy, and is ~~all~~ lined with celotex, for warmth, and has a larger window in it than before. This study cost us ~~at least~~ at least fifty dollars. It is a great satisfaction, as the little room which I had been using was very small, and had practically no natural lighting at all. I could never use it, even on the brightest days, without using an electric light. This is now a fine pantry, and has many possibilities as yet undeveloped.

The greenhouse is our other large project. We did this entirely on our own volition, and just because we were interested in gardening, but it has been a joy already. We have it full of sprouting seeds, and are almost ready to transplant the things out-of-doors. The season is so short here that without such a head start there is not much hope of accomplishing much in the way of flowers or vegetables. This greenhouse has cost us thirty dollars or more.

During a wood shortage in town we invested in a second hand oil burner for the living room, which cost another thirty-five. I believe that we can easily sell this, (and of course we have not disposed of the original wood stove that was there) but are keeping it to give the first chance at buying it to those who will follow us. As to the kitchen stove, I feel sure that the Ladies' Auxiliary will buy this, though I have not sounded them out on the subject. They said, however, at the time we bought it, that when we left they would be glad to have it for the manse. Of course they did not expect that we would be leaving so soon, but I think that stove will be taken care of.

There are a number of other things in the house that we have put in. It is really much more likable and livable than when we came. It has been a pleasure to us to fix it up, and we would do the same over again, but with the expenses of a vacation and a move ahead of us, we would like to get as much of the money out as possible. I wish you could see our house. Do you still expect to come to Alaska this summer? Why don't you bring your wife and make a vacation of it, or take the trip to Barrow with us?

We are anxious to know who our successor will be. We hope, of course that Mr. Tuten will come, but if he does not, I wonder if you would mind my suggesting a name or two of men that I think would do very well in this

field. When we were at Presbytery we became acquainted with the Halls, of Klawock, and were much impressed with their ability. Mr. Hall is an excellent preacher, which is a qualification much needed in a Skagway ~~preacher~~, *man* perhaps more so than in a native field. I believe they like their work at Klawock, and I know they are doing well there, but Mrs. Hall has so much trouble with rheumatism that the very wet climate of Klawock has made her ill a good deal of the time. Perhaps you did not know of this. They are wonderful sports, and I doubt if they would mention it to you unless it got so bad that they felt that they could not go on. It just occurred to us that if you were ~~stuck~~ for a man to come to Skagway it might make a happy solution to the problem if the Halls could be transferred to Skagway, and someone sent to Klawock who could take their time about coming, and who would be physically better able to stand the climate there. Of course the Halls have no idea that we are mentioning such a thing to you, as we only thought of it today. There is also another fellow who might consider coming to Skagway, a member of my class at Princeton, by the name of Thacker ~~bury~~, a fine preacher and very athletic. Perhaps you know of him. *(Fred says you do.)*

I am not sure that these names will help you any, but I took the liberty of suggesting them to you in the hope that suggestions might come in handy. I hope you don't mind.

We are dreading the ordeal of packing, but otherwise are looking forward with a great deal of pleasant anticipation to our trip and work in Barrow. We have been reading all we could find about the place in our library, and everything we read is very fascinating.

Hoping you are well, and that that we are not proving to great a nuisance to you, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

Fred Klerkoper

Dear Mr. Somervell,

I was Fred's amanuensis on this letter as our water tank sprung a leak and he is trying to install a new second-hand one. So if this letter sounds womanish, as Fred says it does, in spots, please blame me.

Sincerely,

Nan K.

Rev. Fred. Klerekoper,
Skagway, Alaska

May
18th
1936

Dear Fred:

I have your letter of May 11th. I haven't yet heard from Mr. Tuten as to whether he wants to go to Skagway, or not. I told him to let me hear from him about the middle of June after he had thought about it and prayed over it. Since I have offered this field to him, I do not feel at liberty to invite the Halls to succeed you unless Tuten declines. Sam Thackaberry is impossible. He just couldn't make it in Alaska. We have tried him out in New Mexico, and while he is a wonderfully fine preacher, he is so erratic and strong-headed and so oblivious to the necessity of cultivating the love and affection of his congregation that he would never do in a place like Skagway. We have had to move him several times in the short period he has been in New Mexico. I am awfully sorry for Sam because I like him very much and he has fine talents, but he is so dreadfully jumpy.

I will keep in mind your plea for your successor to arrive in Skagway as near July 1st as possible. I appreciate your zeal to have him there before you leave, but I do not think there will be any great losses if Mr. Swanson has to be called upon to supply the church for a Sunday or two between your leaving and the arrival of your successor.

Of course you do not want to ship your goods back to Seattle to be loaded on the boat for Barrow. Just be patient about this, as I expect soon to have word from Mr. Gould, to whom I have written as I stated in my last letter, relative to the transportation of yourself and Mrs. Klerekoper and your belongings on one or the other of the government boats.

I appreciate the improvements you have made in the manse. I will compensate you in the sum of \$85 for the addition of the study (\$50) and for the oil burner (\$35), but my dear fellow, I just cannot in justice to the other missionaries reimburse you for your outlay on the greenhouse. Don't think I am stingy or that I do not appreciate what you did in building the greenhouse, but if the other missionaries in Alaska Presbytery should ever learn that I paid for that greenhouse, every one of them would want me to build a greenhouse for them and we simply could not afford it. Strange as it may seem, the older missionaries in Alaska Presbytery are terribly watchful over the younger missionaries, and they are dreadfully afraid that some special favors will be shown to them which have not been given to the older men. However, I can fully justify reimbursing you for the study and for the oil burner, and I am sending you the check for \$85 today.

How I wish I could go with you to Barrow, but it is out of the question. You know how terribly busy I am and how hard it is for me to be away from the office for as long a period as a month, and I could not possibly make Barrow without giving two or three months to the trip. I am planning to be in southeastern Alaska in September with the expectation that I will be able to make a tour of these churches within a month's time; but you will be gone from Skagway before I arrive.

Please tell Nan that I compliment her upon her qualifications as a secretary. She handles the typewriter very well and much better than nine-tenths of the preachers who type their letters to me by the hunt and pick system.

I do hope you can make the trip to the States before going to Barrow.

With every good wish for you both, I am

Faithfully yours,

Walter H. Rorer
Chairman, Board of Directors

(6/1/56)

JMS:BN

F. D. Klerekoper

NARRATIVE OF LABORS IN AND AROUND SKAGWAY, ALASKA.

Undoubtedly the curse of the Indian is drink. They, in many respects, have much more control of their feelings than do the whites, but when it comes to liquor, they do not know what control means. I do not like to be filling these reports every month with stories about liquor, but they seem to have been connected with many of our experiences. For example, we were invited to a birthday party of an Indian man who lives near our place. Our host had to be put to bed before we got there as he was not in condition to meet us. The old lady who was at the home helping to do the dishes, got drunk and broke up the party by locking herself in a room with our host, determined that she would marry him.

We kept one of the little girls, who has been living at this home, over at our house that night, until things should quiet down. Mrs. Klerekoper found the smallest pair of pajamas she could, and pinned them up to fit her. In the morning, the little girl, about six years of age, had her first experience in a bath tub; I mean a real, honest-to-goodness bath tub, with hot and cold running water. What a lot of fun she had. We didn't mind mopping up the floor after her, for we knew that she had a great experience. My study well let in the words of the chorus she was singing as Mrs. Klerekoper helped her dry herself:

"In the cross, in the cross, be my glory ever,
Till my raptured soul shall find,
Rest beyond the river."

I prayed then and there that her glory would always be in that Cross, and that the Glory might be her own, until her rest beyond

the river. It made us sad to think that such a nice little girl should have to be brought up where her relatives and friends were so often drunk. As all the native children and grown-ups seem to do, she told stories about other little children. One, particularly, was about a little friend who, she said, kept coming to her house to steal things. She could not produce any satisfactory evidence of the guilt of her friend, so I said, "How do you know she did it? Maybe I did it." She seemed quite shocked at that idea, and replied quickly, "Oh, you couldn't. You belong to God." But she was so excited after her bath that she could not wait to talk much, or even to eat her breakfast, but ran home to tell her grandmother all about it.

Another event of interest this month was the town's annual midnight picnic. This is held every year on the longest day, and the whole town turns out. Everyone brought their lunch, and coffee was served by the Alpine Club. The band, which is now functioning for the first time in many years, rendered the music. Though this is not, strictly speaking, the land of the midnight sun, yet at midnight on June 21st, even Skagway was quite light, so that we could read by daylight, and easily find our way home through the woods.

At our young people's meetings, we have been having some very interesting discussions on the Christian life, thanks to the magazine, "Selected Topics", which we have been using. One girl, who had been "outside", (which means to the United States proper) had joined the church there simply because the pastor and his wife had so insisted and urged her that she had joined for their sakes, not her own. She said she had always looked forward

to the time when she would be able to take part in a communion service, but ~~that~~ she had been terribly disappointed when she had taken the elements on the Sunday after joining the church. I gave her a Manual for Communicants Classes, prepared by J.R. Miller, and have hoped in some way to reassure her that she has made the right step in joining the church. But we have learned a lesson, which means to us; do not try to force a young person to join the church just because it is Easter, and others are doing it.

There were two destroyers that came to visit us with about 175 men aboard. We played baseball and basket-ball with them, and the town gave dances in their honor. There were two units of the R.O.T.C., one from Washington University and another from the University of California. The town was full of them, but of them all, only one was at church on the following Sunday morning.

This month has not been without its sorrows. The first death was that of an old man, who had been suffering with asthma. Skagway, during certain months of the year is not the best place for victims of this disease. A collection had been taken to send him to Whitehorse, over the border in British Columbia. but he died the night before he was to leave, and the funds were given to the undertaker for the funeral expences.

The second death was that of a ~~little~~ girl, the daughter of of one of our druggists. She had been the conductor on the "Skagway Street-car" (which we will describe next month), and had smiled her way into the heart of everyone she met. There had been no deaths by disease of any children in the town, since our present doctor came here, nine years ago. The town is generally a healthy place, and this death was a shock to everyone. The fun-

eral was the largest, according to some people, of any for a great many years. To make matters harder for me, I had received only that morning a cablegram stating that my own father had passed to his heavenly home. It was, frankly, the hardest thing I ever had to do, to conduct the funeral of such a beloved little girl, with my own heart aching for home and loved ones. But God is gracious and plenteous in mercy, and we felt drawn closer to the bereaved family than we could have, had the circumstances been otherwise.